

Brier Creek / Closest Unit

04/10/07 322 W - + 16 - 12

Though yesterday's major fire was at the very edge of the city, it was still quite close to a bunch of non -Raleigh stations. Listed below are driving distances, via Google and MapQuest, from 9105 Meadow Mist Court to these stations. In the perfect world of closet -station dispatch, the run card for Brier Creek would probably bring RFD, DFD, BFD, and maybe PFD and DHFD on a first alarm. In the real world, there are county lines, municipal boundaries, and other jurisdictional considerations. Plus the powerful citizen perspective, which goes something like "if I pay taxes in This City, why is the fire truck by my house going to a fire in That City?" And so on. The different distances are interesting when compared. Who knew some of the Durham stations were so comparably close?

Distance in Miles

Raleigh #24 - 1.83
 Durham #13 - 3.78
 Bethesda #1 - 4.10
 RDU - 4.30
 Raleigh #23 - 5.17
 Parkwood #3 - 5.78
 Durham Highway - 6.26
 Raleigh #17 - 6.97
 Redwood #3 - 7.10
 Durham #12 - 7.23
 Bethesda #2 - 7.47
 Durham #3 - 7.82
 Durham #4 - 8.00
 Durham #8 - 8.00
 Morrisville #2 - 8.01
 Raleigh #18 - 8.84
 Parkwood #1 - 9.30
 Bay Leaf #3 - 9.43
 Bay Leaf #2 - 9.50
 Raleigh #16 - 9.57
 Morrisville #1 - 10.30
 Durham #1 - 10.40
 Raleigh #14 - 10.54
 Western Wake #1 - 11.00
 Cary #1 - 11.00
 Durham #9 - 11.10
 Raleigh #4 - 11.29
 Bay Leaf #1 - 11.50
 Raleigh #6 - 11.80
 Redwood #1 - 12.10
 Durham #2 - 12.20
 Durham #5 - 12.40
 Cary #7 - 12.50
 Raleigh #9 - 12.60
 Raleigh #5 - 13.40
 Western Wake #2 - 13.60
 Durham #7 - 13.70
 Raleigh #8 - 14.20
 Redwood #2 - 14.40
 Raleigh #22 - 14.60

Raleigh #11 - 14.80

Distance in Miles, Grouped by Department:

Bay Leaf #1 - 11.50

Bay Leaf #2 - 9.50

Bay Leaf #3 - 9.43

Bethesda #1 - 4.10

Bethesda #2 - 7.47

Cary #1 - 11.00

Cary #7 - 12.50

Durham #1 - 10.40

Durham #2 - 12.20

Durham #3 - 7.82

Durham #4 - 8.00

Durham #5 - 12.40

Durham #7 - 13.70

Durham #8 - 8.00

Durham #9 - 11.10

Durham #12 - 7.23

Durham #13 - 3.78

Durham Highway - 6.26

Morrisville #1 - 10.30

Morrisville #2 - 8.01

Parkwood #1 - 9.30

Parkwood #3 - 5.78

Raleigh #4 - 11.29

Raleigh #5 - 13.40

Raleigh #6 - 11.80

Raleigh #8 - 14.20

Raleigh #9 - 12.60

Raleigh #14 - 10.54

Raleigh #16 - 9.57

Raleigh #17 - 6.97

Raleigh #18 - 8.84

Raleigh #22 - 14.60

Raleigh #23 - 5.17

Raleigh #24 - 1.83

RDU - 4.30

Redwood #1 - 12.10

Redwood #2 - 14.40

Redwood #3 - 7.10

Western Wake #1 - 11.00

Western Wake #2 - 13.60

There should have been no reason for 14, 16, or 18 to go to that fire, the others houses that are closer should have gone in place.

Roger - 04/10/07 - 20:09

The only problem I have had with closest unit dispatch is that all departments do not have the same training (nor should they), they do not follow the same philosophies, nor do they have the same terminology. For instance is a rescue just a rig that contains certain tools, or is it a rig that is staffed with specially trained personnell. There are some instances where closest unit dispatch is clearly the right idea, but I believe that WHEN POSSIBLE units from the same department should be asked to respond together.

Eric - 04/10/07 - 23:34

I really don't care who you are with for an initial dispatch. If you can get water on my fire to put it out, go for it. But if you still want a "specialty" truck, go ahead and get them on the way. But just dont let it delay you getting me the wet stuff to put on the hot stuff.

Guest - 04/11/07 - 02:02

Eric, I agree.....

Silver - 04/11/07 - 09:13

Eric, excellent points.

As has been said on here, time and time again, BEFORE closest unit dispatch could work, ALL departments need to be on the same page when it comes to (minimum) training standards, terminology, and STAFFING! It's all well and good to be "first on scene" but that doesn't do squat when it comes to "first water on the fire!" Being first on scene won't put the fire out, first water will! If you are first on scene, but have to wait for another crew to arrive in order to put the fire out... congrats... when you mention you were "first in" don't forget to say that you had to wait for the second due to arrive until you could being to attack the fire.

I think a good idea to help ease into the change might be for Raleigh to continue to send its normal full assignment and then to notify the 'closer' County stations and have them respond too. If the IC on scene determines that they have enough resources on scene to handle the incident, they can turn the remainder of the assignment around. I'm sure this is already happening in some areas of the County (e.g. DHFD).

Like it or not, it is my understanding that for calls within the Raleigh Fire District, it is Raleigh Fire Department's responsibility that the incident gets mitigated. Until everyone is on the same page, with the same resources, staffing, etc, Raleigh should continue to respond to those areas of their district. Ultimately, if something goes wrong and not enough resources are on scene, I'm sure the fingers will be pointed at the responsible fire department for dropping the ball in their "district."

Unfortunately, when we are in someone else's sandbox we must play by their rules. Until the sandbox is expanded to bring everyone to the same (minimum) level, there will continue to be cases when a 'closer' county station is passed by a city station.

I think Chief Swift summed up the situation the best with his post on The Watch Desk: <http://www.thewatchdesk.com/forum/showth..>

Luke - 04/11/07 - 11:19

At SCFD we have been working with RFD for some time now on closest station response. For calls in the city, the city sends a normal response and we send the most appropriate unit from SCFD. For example on a medical call, RFD sends one unit (typically an engine) and we send our first responder unit (brush truck). On a fire alarm, RFD sends a normal response (2-E, 1-L and 1-Chief) and SCFD sends an engine. Like wise for calls in the county, SCFD sends a normal response and RFD sends their single closes unit.

It is working well for us. If the unit giving aid arrives first and can handle the scene, they just notify the AHJ and the "responsible" (receiving aid) unit can decide if they need to continue on or not. Maybe the do need to continue, (gather report information, assist with repeat alarms, investigation for a pattern of events) or maybe they unit can cancel (tree already removed from road, medical call when extra help is not needed). It is very similar to what we are doing with other county department.

Griggs - 04/11/07 - 12:51

When mapquesting the distance between Bethesda station 2 and the fire scene mapquest takes the wrong route thus adding over 3 miles of distance. From station two the engine would go down mt herman to acc to brier creek pkwy and cross over down lumley, sporting club, and then meadow mist. They would not go all the way down leesville to 70 as mapquest suggests as that would be going around their elbow to get to their ass.....

Kevin - 04/11/07 - 14:25

Which depratments in this county do not staff trucks with FF level 2 / and EMT thats what raleigh runs and thats what the majority of the county runs, if county stations don't want to meet that then they dont need to respond with city but with that training level there is no reason not to.

Dear Eric - 04/11/07 - 15:02

Dear Eric its not just question of whether the departments staff level 2 firefighters and EMT. The question is do they staff Level 2 firefighters a driver operator, EMT and are familiar with Raleigh SOPs when running inside the city. If its a combination dept do the volunteers or duty crews

have the same qualifications and understanding as the full time staff if they are not 24 hrs. Is there consistent training between the city and county fire departments. Not only do you have different philosophies on mitigating emergency or fire scenes but also different equipment, hose sizes to even coupling thread differences between apparatus. There has to be a lot more cross-training between the departments, and getting to know each other also. The theory, closest unit despite jurisdiction, sounds wonderful but you don't have time to show or explain why you are doing something and how you want it done when a roof is burning off one house and siding off 2 more. Every department spends hundreds of hours training with their own people and how they want things done so it is a reflex when you show up on a scene. It can create more confusion and actually be time consuming showing up in another jurisdiction when their reflexes are different than yours. But first and foremost the powers to be in the upper ranks have to come to an agreement or understanding and want each others help and a plan to do so.

guest - 04/11/07 - 15:34

Guest hit the nail on the head, but I'll elaborate a little more. Just because two depts. are staffed with firefighters trained to FFII does not mean that these depts operate the same. The role of the second due engine co. can vary between depts, ladder company operations can be vastly different between departments. Some depts rely heavily on PPV while others do not, some depts commonly practice VES, others don't, some depts have the ladder co force entry and locate the fire while in others the engine co is assigned those tasks. Where does the first engine park in relation to the fire building? Who is responsible for water supply? Where does the RIT team set up and have they been trained in RIT tactics, and is the RIT automatically assigned or does command have to designate a RIT company? The way we answer those questions is what differentiates fire departments, and is the reason why closest unit dispatch is not universally correct.

Eric - 04/11/07 - 17:33

"Dear Eric" if I'm not mistaken, most volunteers are only required to get their First Responder cert, not their EMT. In fact, even the paid staff at those departments would only be required to have a First Responder cert, not EMT. I could be wrong, but I thought Raleigh and Cary were the only departments that "required" their firefighters to be EMTs.

Also, if you are running a 'true' closest unit response then it wouldn't matter night or day, the closest unit would respond. Look at many of your stations at night... who assists with staffing? Volunteers. I'm not in any way bashing the volunteers, but I know from experience that you don't have to have your FF1 & FF2 in order to ride the trucks. True, you have to get that within a given period of time (1-2 yrs).. but you still aren't required to have it in order to occupy a seat on the truck.

These are the types of things that I see as issues that would need to be worked out before closest unit response would work well.

Luke - 04/11/07 - 18:33

cross training and standard operating procedures for fireground operations, plain and simple. put everybody on the same page, with similar staffing and equipment and rock on... it's far too long that this county hasn't done that...

and bottom line we all put the wet stuff on the red stuff, we all SHOULD establish RIT and be trained in it, we should be integral no matter what the name is on the truck. it just takes time, effort and to lose the egos...

[CFP 7021] ([Email](#)) - 04/11/07 - 18:35

CFP, You try to make it sound like its just as simple as 1,2,3 and 'shazam' (lack of better word) the closest unit can start running calls inside someone else's jurisdiction. I wish it was that simple, but again its up to the Chiefs to be comfortable with it and to work it out. As far as I'm concerned its not about the egos. You also have to remember this is not structure fire specific (see Luke's comment). One training session every 6 months with a neighboring jurisdiction is not enough especially if the shifts aren't consistent with each other. Not to mention there is no telling which volunteers will show up. Hard to get any unity going that way. Raleigh is going through constant changes in the way we do things and new training, finding time to do all the extra cross-training needed is a little difficult at times. Especially some Raleigh units that are surrounded by multiple jurisdictions. There again theory sounds good, but think it will be a few years before things change dramatically.

"formally known as guest, but didn't realize someone already used that at top of page"

guest2 - 04/11/07 - 19:14

The distance from Bethesda #2 has been corrected, though it looks like the various routes all equal around either 4 or 4.5-ish miles.

Legeros - 04/11/07 - 19:43

Well it's all about attitude and effort. I know for a fact that after CFD developed their fireground operation plan that they cross-trained with the surrounding county units about it, and shared the written information. It's not 1,2,3... you probably have to count to about 100.... but it still starts with 1. Fighting fire is just about the same no matter where you go, it's really not that different. The biggest things are dealing with a pressurized water supply or a static supply. Everything else is just tactics. Yes with vollys you don't know what you're going to get, I agree...

but that's a fact of the fire service in this county. But even that is changing, after the 1st of July you'll see at least 1-2 24/7 people at every county station/department. It's a start. Other than that you can't tell me you don't "have the time" to train with your mutual aid/auto aid companies, that's pure and utter crap, we all have the time... whether we choose to or not is the difference. Take the time to get to know your surrounding guys, especially the daytime guys, chances are at least one or two in the crowd work for Raleigh as it is. Chances are some of the vollys that may show up are also Raleigh guys, or Cary guys, or Durham guys... or wherever. Heck I'm sure you train with your surrounding Raleigh companies, how about invite the surrounding county units to come play as well? what's the harm in that? It doesn't take approval from Car 1, it just takes a phone call. I've seen it work with county going to city and city going to county, it's all about attitude and ego, every last one I've been to.

And it'll take longer than a few years to change anything if we're all afraid to start...

get out there, get to know your guys/gals in the surrounding city and county companies/departments, go into it with an open attitude, it's amazing what might happen...

after all... this ain't rocket science I've seen RFD and CFD companies work 100% effective with county companies, it can work and it does work... it just takes some effort

[CFP 7021] ([Email](#)) - 04/11/07 - 20:00

CFP I see where the ego comes in. 1- as for the "utter crap" I never said "have the time" just said it can make it difficult. 2- The logistics of training with all the volunteers and different shifts of other jurisdictions on a "regular basis" so that everyone is on the same page takes time plus there is no standardization within the county that matches the cities. Thank you though for informing me about getting to know the daytime guys would be beneficial, never thought about that. If you run with Swift Creek, Western Wake or Falls sure, they have set shifts (A,B,C) for part-timers, and 5 day a week officers and ff's most of the time during the day but you cannot say the same about every department surrounding Raleigh or at night when the daytime people leave. 3- No its not rocket science it is a bureaucracy when dealing with municipalities. Simple fact of life. Anyway i believe changes in some areas may be made eventually like Durham E13 may end up 2nd in with 24 in some areas and vice versa. Again we will see. I believe that the majority of Raleigh guys, especially ones who work the outlying areas where city units are more spread out, would welcome the outside help if they knew who or what they were getting and felt comfortable with them. Until there is some standards set u simply don't know.

guest2 - 04/11/07 - 21:23

I completely understand where you are coming from, and am in the same boat. But like I said, we have to make the time, make the effort. Every department in this county has a set schedule whether it comes from part time guys or full time guys. some are there shifts, some (like Bay Leaf and New Hope) are full time 8-5 guys. I also think you'd be surprised to see that a lot of the county procedures are based in part of things that Raleigh, Cary, Durham do. After all there are a lot of chiefs in the area that are from Raleigh/Cary/Durham/Chapel Hill, etc.

I totally understand about what you might get at night, and I think with the county finally coming to the realization that full time 24-7 coverage for the county stations is the only way to go. That is one HUGE step closer to an integrated system. Also when you look at some depts around Raleigh like Garner, Morrisville, DH, Wake Forest, Eastern Wake... they all have full time staff that work just like Raleigh/Cary, etc do. We're getting closer, it's amazing what happens when a city unit calls for a county unit or vice versa, kind of like a low level decision that can be made at a company level. It's a process, and luckily in the works, but us at the company level can help to speed it along.

[CFP 7021] ([Email](#)) - 04/11/07 - 21:37

As a volly at Durham Highway I can tell you that our 24 hour guys are very familer with Raleigh's sops as are our active vollies, our employees are required to be FF II with EMT and our drivers all have DR/OP and our paid Capts have there officer level 2s i believe, so to my understanding we acheive the same training requirments as Raleigh so why not have us run more and be pulled a little farther into the city? IMO we should have gone on that 1st Alarm and if not the 1st defiently the 2nd alarm but what can you do...

DHFD - 04/11/07 - 22:11

I was actually very surprised not to hear DHFD go on that box... nor cover some of the following calls that E-9 got sent to (MVA at Glenwood and Ebenezer Church!)

[CFP 7021] ([Email](#)) - 04/11/07 - 23:48

I agree that standard training AND staffing will need to be met before real closest station response would work well(with everybody agreeing on it). Also, don't think that because a county unit is not called it is not wanted or needed. You have to remember that there are alot of Raleigh officers who have been on the job a long time who have not been able to call for county help in the past. That's something that will take some getting used to, give it time. Alot of the officers that i talk to would like to use county help, it's just not thought of sometimes "in the heat of

the moment".

firedriver - 04/12/07 - 00:22

we heard the mva come in and headed that way but it turned out to be nothing.

DHFD - 04/12/07 - 08:05

I was driving E-9 that day and did a double-take when the MVA at Glenwood and Ebenezer Church came in. If that isn't a beautiful example of the closest unit argument, I don't know what is! Lucky, EMS canceled us rather quickly. I suppose we should have requested a closer county unit to take the call.

RFD574 - 04/12/07 - 14:14

We knew what was going on at the fire and where the available units Raleigh had were so we were listening but we try not to step on anyone's toes that's why we headed 10-40 traffic over there and then were advised that no fire unit was needed. If you Raleigh capt's think about calling us we'll come no problem and usually in a circumstance like that we will head in that direction if we aren't dispatched.

DHFD - 04/12/07 - 14:45

Ya know what... the radio works both ways... Imagine E-9 running emergency traffic all the way down to that call, just to find out that another unit was just cruisin down and got to the scene. OK now imagine E-9 getting involved in an accident and seriously hurting somebody. And then hearing another unit mark on scene of the call they were busting tail to get to.... that would be interesting in a court of law!

[CFP 7021] ([Email](#)) - 04/12/07 - 17:16

Goes the other way to, what if DHFD was busting balls to get to the call and got in a serious MVC (knock on wood that this doesn't ever happen) and then people are like well you weren't on the original dispatch so why'd you need to go? Either way the solution is change the city run orders and add county stations too them and hell you can do the same thing with the county run orders. Ex. you pull up a location on cad and you that stations that go say Ebenezer and Glenwood, its S23 S17 S24....well after S23 you could put DH1 or after S17 which ever way.

DHFD - 04/12/07 - 18:10

Well, I have sat back and read the comments going on here. I can't help but laugh at some of the things being said here. Folks, I have said it before and I will say it again here. THERE IS A FIX TO THE PROBLEM, it's called STANDARDIZATION!! If anyone here has a doubt about whether a common strategic plan will work, simply look at the metro DC area (Both MD & Va). In that area you have 10 DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS OPERATING IN THE SAME MANNER. Some do it better than others, but that happens everywhere, but everyone follows the same rules and SOP/SOGs. If you standardize things like:

staffing

Training

Apparatus

Operational procedures

Instead of everyone sitting back saying it won't work, get off of your ass and make it work. Chiefs McGrath and Swift, two from outside this place, will tell you "it's time to bring Wake Co. up to some sort of better standard.

Stay safe

Wayne - 04/12/07 - 18:44

Well said Wayne, well said.

-I might be in your area in May, at Camp Celebrate.

Luke - 04/12/07 - 20:37

Why not get on the radio, call the long distance responding equipment, advise them of your location and ask if they would like you to check in? They may not know that there is a closer unit available.

firedriver - 04/12/07 - 23:31

I don't see the problem in that thanks for the suggestion.

DHFD - 04/13/07 - 08:36

Name: (real name preferred)
E-mail: (optional)
Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

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No

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To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

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Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

Small print: All html tags except and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.